



MEDIA RELEASE

Residential Vegetation Fire

SANTA BARBARA, CA – February 26, 2013

A vegetation fire was reported shortly after 11a.m. this morning in the front yard of a Samarkand home. The fire was reported by several neighbors who noticed the smoke. The smoke quickly turned to flames that began to threaten the residential structure.

A Santa Barbara County Fire engine was near-by and the first unit to arrive on scene. With assistance from Santa Barbara City Engine 3, County Engine 15 quickly extinguished the fire. Fire crews overhauled the fire area and checked for fire extension into the structure utilizing thermal imaging cameras. A fire investigator was called to the scene to interview the homeowner and determine the cause of the fire. The homeowner stated that he had cleaned the ashes out of his fireplace using a paper bag. The bag was placed in the garden area to the front of his home. According to the homeowner, the fireplace had not been in use for a couple of days and he had assumed the coals were cold. The coals did eventually produce enough heat to ignite the paper bag and then the vegetation.

There are two important messages to highlight from this incident. The Santa Barbara City Fire Department recommends that homeowners utilize non-combustible metal containers to remove coals from a fireplace or barbeque. Before depositing the coals into a trash container, be sure to stir and wet down the coals to ensure complete extinguishment. Secondly, when this homeowner decided to use his garden hose to attack the fire, his wife wisely called 911 to notify the fire department. Never delay the notification of 911. Even if you are successful in extinguishing the fire, let the fire department investigate to be sure the fire is completely out.



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